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REVIEWS AND NOTES.

An Introduction to the Theory of Statistics. By G. Udney Yule. London: Charles Griffen and Company. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1911. Pp. xiii, 376.

In this volume have been brought together the recent contributions to the theory of statistics by such writers as Elderton, Pearson, Hooker, Edgeworth, and Yule. Since the writings of these statisticians are scattered through various periodicals it is a satisfaction to find them analyzed and fitted into their proper places by such an able statistician as Mr. Yule. With this book properly digested the reader should have little trouble in following the investigation of the writers mentioned above. To understand this volume the student must have had excellent mathematical training for Mr. Yule is not sparing in his use of algebraical formulas. It is doubtful whether the average college student is sufficiently equipped with mathematics to use this volume as a text, but it might be replied that no student should expect to become a statistician until he has been equipped with sufficient mathematics. There is, however, a large number of students of economics and sociology who would be benefited by further study of statistics, but who would find this volume too mathematical. Such persons would probably turn rather to the works of Bowley or Newsholme.

To most students the chapters of greatest interest will be those upon the Frequency-Distributions, Averages, Measures of Dispersion, and Correlation. This volume possibly contains the best study upon correlation of any which can be put in the hands of a student of exceptional mathematical ability. The requirements of a good average are very cleverly stated. It should be rigidly defined, should be based on all the observations made, should not be of too abstract a mathematical character, should be calculated with reasonable ease and rapidity, should be as little affected as possible by the fluctuations of sampling, and should lend itself readily to algebraical treatment. One of the valuable sections of the book is a very satisfactory treatment of asymmetry or skewness.

A valuable feature of the volume is the computation of one or more examples under each subject. In this way the student is enabled to see for himself how results are obtained. At the end of each chapter a number of similar examples are given, together with a list of the best references upon this subject. Probably over nine tenths of the articles noted are from English writers. This volume should appeal to the serious student of statistics. The average student who wishes to gain a little information upon statistical method will probably be better satisfied with some more elementary book.

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